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587 If, after a number of years of marriage, a man's wife is sterile,
595 he has a right to apply to his wife's family for a second wife, providing his first wife agrees. The formalities entailed in this request are the same as those which have to be performed after the death of a first wife;[12] an extra preliminary present has to be given, but the subsequent expenses for the marriage are slightly less. In theory it is only permissible to take a second wife from the first wife's *ptso*, and ideally this second wife should be the first wife's real or classificatory younger sister. This is recognised in the terms with
[601] which co-wives are always referred to; the Nepali words *jethi* and *kanchi*, meaning 'eldest sister' and 'youngest sister' are always used; Lepcha has no equivalent terms to indicate the position of a child in the order of birth. In the great majority of cases the ideal conditions are observed, and the two wives, if not actual sisters, are of the same *ptso* and use kinship terms. In cultural theory the co-wives have already an established habit of cooperation and cohabitation which only needs to be renewed, and the situation of co-wife is meant to be an agreeable one. This expectation is not always justified; occasionally co-wives quarrel; but the majority are glad for the companionship of a close relative, and the lessened work which their presence means. The husband is meant to spend alternate nights with each of them.

595 In Lingthem there are seven men with two wives each; but only in three cases was the second wife taken because the first wife was sterile. In two of the cases the second wife is indeed only a co-wife by courtesy; Asang gave a home to the middle-aged widow of his elder brother, because she had nowhere else to go; and for the same reason Gongyop took in his wife's sister. In this second case the hospitality was not long accepted; though nearly sixty years old, this woman, Samblyou, with her elder sister Mrs. Takal, is the most promiscuous woman in the village, and after distributing her favours in nearly every direction, including the seduction of a number of the younger boys, she is now cohabiting with Zumba, a widower twelve years younger than herself.

Chala Mandal has had in all four wives in two pairs; the first wife he gave to a 'younger brother', who lived with him; after her death he also gave him her equally sterile sister; this second wife returned to her family after the death of the

[12] See p. 159.

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'younger brother'. Chala Mandal then married two more wives, 595
'sisters', and nieces of the first two wives; the last wife of all was the widow of Katel's dead son to whom she had already borne two daughters who stayed with their grandfather; after her marriage to the Mandal she bore two more daughters, one of whom still survives.

Thyak Thimbu has also had four wives in two pairs. The first two died childless; the second two, though not related to the first wives, are themselves aunt and niece. Almost after hope of Thyak Thimbu—he is Gongyop's elder brother—producing a child had been abandoned his youngest wife bore a son in May 1937. Lumba *chithembu* has also had two wives, 'grandmother' and 'granddaughter'; the second wife has borne him three children. Lumba *jethi* is a rather independent old body; though she gets on well enough with her co-wife she dislikes what she calls 'living in a crowd' and consequently has made a permanent home for herself in a field-house, which she shares with her younger stepson; it is a rule that, if for any reason co-wives separate, the children shall be equally divided. The two wives cooperate in all the field-work. Lumba is meant to divide his time equally between the two of them, but well-authenticated rumour says that he spends much more time with *jethi*; she is a jolly and extremely bawdy old party. She is a Mun and is nearly always the singer on those occasions when singing is ceremonially called for.

By his first wife Katel had one son and three daughters; but the daughters married away, and the son, a thief and a ne'er-do-well, died a violent death in foreign parts. Therefore ostensibly in the hope of begetting another son Katel married a second wife, of a different *ptso* to his first one (who is still living) a woman twenty-seven years younger than himself; she is only eighteen now. Very exceptionally for a Lepcha, he is deeply in love with this young wife of his; she on the other hand cannot stick Katel, and the marriage is extremely stormy, with threats of and occasional attempts at suicide on both sides. For a number of years this young wife refused to go to live with Katel; finally two years ago the Mandal threatened her parents that if they permitted their daughter to live with or return to them, they must refund the marriage price. So for two years she has been living with Katel, but she still refuses to sleep with him, despite the jewels and presents with which he has smothered her; it is rumoured that she finds pleasanter bed-fellows elsewhere. Katel though rich and fairly

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545 industrious, is so stupid as to be almost defective, and has a very unpleasant look of low cunning. He is one of the most unpopular people in the village: I personally found him quite repulsive.

Finally there is the case of Aga, the son of Hlatam the 'poisoner', which represents one of the most disruptive situations possible in Lepcha life. Aga has been married a number of years; his wife has borne him three children, and was in the spring of 1937 pregnant with a fourth. During the greater part of his married life Aga slept, quite legitimately, with the sterile wife of one of his paternal uncles. When this uncle died in 1935 the aunt returned home to her blood-relations in the neighbouring village of Lungdeum, as there was no suitable man in her husband's family to inherit her. At the end of the year of mourning she was *asék*'d by Zumba of Lingthem; but six months after this *asék* she came and settled permanently in Aga's house, with whom she had continued her intercourse uninterruptedly. Aga's first wife was naturally very angry and reproachful, as there is no possible excuse for bringing home a second wife when the first wife is fertile; and, as marriage is the concern of the whole group, all her family are angry with Aga and his aunt. This aunt has been argued with for days on end; people have pointed out to her how desirable Zumba, with his fine house and many fields, is as a husband; but she remains obdurate and refuses to go and live with him. The situation is naturally extremely unpleasant and disturbing, and is under constant discussion by the Mandals of Lingthem and Lungdeum. There is a constant fear that the first wife's family will come and demand elaborate reparation from Aga, or alternatively that she may return home with her children to them. This behaviour is loudly condemned by the other Lepchas; it is chiefly for this that Aga is called 'evil-minded'.

Some years ago there was another similar but more pathetic situation. After the Muktair was married and his wife, Tafoor-mu, had borne him two children, he went to Gangtok for five years to study in one of the big monasteries. During this long absence he fell in love with another girl, and on his return he asked Tafoor-mu to let him bring a second wife home. She at first naturally objected; she had borne him two sons; what was the justification for bringing home a second wife? But the Muktair promised that he would love both wives equally, and she finally allowed herself to be persuaded; the Muktair then *asék*'d the girl from Gangtok and brought her home two years later: their only child, a daughter, was born in this interval. When she came home this second wife

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proved to be jealous and possessive, and refused to allow her husband to sleep with Tafoor-mu.

Dunbi was the 'younger brother' (actually the son of a younger paternal uncle) of the Muktair; at the period when the second wife was brought home he was completely alone, for his parents, wife, and children had all died in a dysentery epidemic. The Muktair took him into his house, and there he so well consoled Tafoor-mu that she became pregnant. The Muktair thereupon offered her to Dunbi; he *asék*'d her with the symbolical gift of one pig, and the families separated. One year later the second wife died.

The position of Tafoor-mu is one of the saddest in Lingthem; formerly the wife of the most prosperous man in the neighbourhood, and with two prosperous sons, she is now married to the poorest and most feckless man in the village. She has borne him three daughters; the eldest is married away, the second lives with her half-brother, Tafoor—she is unbetrothed Prumtu, the girl with the squint—and the youngest is a child of six. Although Tafoor and Chudo give her occasional presents she lives and dresses poorly, and has to work hard to compensate for her husband's sloth. As far as I could observe, Tafoor and Chudo feel little love or respect for their unfortunate mother.

We in Europe make passionate and personal love one of the chief pivots round which our society moves; the Lepchas of Zongu have completely excluded it, and it is liable to be extremely disruptive when it does flare up. The normal emotional situation is one of reasonable affection founded on mutual rights and benefits; people love one another for statable and stated reasons. No love is considered automatic; it is not considered inevitable that parents should love their children nor brothers their brothers and sisters; it is merely considered probable, because their situations entail the mutual obligations on which love is supposed to rest. Unless people are strongly deviant Lepchas are chary of pronouncing judgement on their neighbours' characters; most people, they say, are much of a muchness. Consequently it is to be expected that arranged marriages will turn out well, unless one of the partners has a really bad character; since love is founded on mutual obligations and benefits, these mutual obligations can be set up between any two people. It is worth noting that all three men whose love stories are recounted above fall well outside the Lepcha norm. The Muktair was, it would appear, an exceptionally strong-willed and ambitious man, and his love affair started when he was living

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tration of the cultural attitude to sex when he said that he had twice slept with a girl at Parfok, at her request, when he accompanied his father there to help perform religious ceremonies; he enjoyed the experience and would willingly repeat it; but he does not want to marry the girl because he does not like her.

It is permissible for a man who feels himself unable to cope with his field-work, either on account of physical weakness or because he has other work which takes him a great deal from the neighbourhood, to invite an unmarried younger brother to live with him and to share his fields and wife. The co-husband is co-opted without any sort of ceremony, but thereafter he is no longer free in the choice of a wife of his own, if he desires one; he must make the request for a wife of the same *ptso* as the shared wife, exactly as if he was taking a second wife in the normal course of events. The co-husbands sleep with their common wife on alternate nights, but all the children are presumed to be begotten by the first husband, and he alone has to observe the pre-natal precautions; an exception is only made to this rule if the first husband's prolonged absence makes his paternity a physiological impossibility.

In the recent past there have only been two cases of such polyandry in Lingthem; one is that of Chala Mandal, described above, who first shared and then gave his first two wives to a 'younger brother'; the second is that of the second Dorjé Lapoon, who shared his wife with his real elder brother; this brother was a lama attached to another village who was almost always away, so that the second Dorjé Lapoon had almost the exclusive use of his shared wife. It is not allowable for two unrelated men to share a wife, but two who call themselves 'brothers' may do so; unless the two men are closely related this is considered undesirable, as it is liable to lead to quarrelling. There are some obvious advantages for a first husband in co-opting a second husband; it is an easy way to get rid of a wife of whom you are tired; it gives an extra adult worker and a care-taker for your property and wife when you have to be absent. The position of second co-husband on the other hand seems to offer few attractions except to the poor and unambitious, under-sexed man, and it is understandable that there are very few examples of such polyandry. In the event of polyandry or polygyny the incest prohibition against sleeping with your husband's younger brother, or your wife's elder sister, are obviously suspended.

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was married off to another man, but the Dorje-Lopön was made to refund the original marriage price. He was, however, given the custody of his son Datoop, now a man of fifty, and one of the leading lights in the Lingtem monastery. As a child Datoop lived sometimes with his father and sometimes with his mother, who had now married the headman of a nearby village. It seemed as though the Dorje-Lopön would now settle down to respectable married life; but in the course of his wanderings he one day discovered an attractive young girl in a neighbouring village. Chapshay was her name, and almost at once he deserted his wife and went to live at the home of his new friend's parents, only coming to Lingtem for the purpose of attending periodical ceremonies at the monastery. After a time Chapshay's parents tired of the situation and suggested that the Dorje-Lopön might at least regularise his position. To this he consented; and accordingly presented them with the necessary carcass of a pig. While he was still living with Chapshay he one day espied her niece, with whom he instantly fell in love. It was a mere matter of months for him to make Atyok pregnant; and when this occurred her parents forced him to do the ceremony known as *Tip-song*, in order that she should not give birth to a bastard. This was followed by marriage. For some time the three lived together at Chapshay's home, the Dorje-Lopön still coming to Lingtem from time to time. In those days, before the present building had been erected, the main door of the monastery faced towards the east. There was but one big prayer-drum, and it was housed in a separate little building known as the *Hla-gong*. Living in Lingtem at the time was one Jiroong, whose wife, a woman much older than he, was also an Inebu. She had already been married before going to live with Jiroong, but her former husband and all his near relations were dead. She was not attractive; but since Jiroong's parents were too poor to obtain a better wife for him he was forced to submit. Jiroong's wife was in charge of the *Hla-gong*, which meant that she was often about in the monastery; and in those days

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159 visiting her brother, who had left his home and settled in
587 Lingtem. She was not too old, unmarried, and not uncomely. Jiroong started to visit her; and soon decided that she was the one girl who could change his life: she was. He worked hard in his fields; and before long had saved enough money to buy the necessary pig. Tempa was willing to let his sister go; and so the two were married. They now have two children of their own; but life is not all roses. Mrs. Jiroong, it appears, is fond of the bottle; and when she indulges displays an uncontrollable temper. Although he is now a senior Lama, Jiroong has to submit to the indignity of
[837] finding his wife debarred from entering the monastery. This he could bear; but unfortunately his wife cares nothing for monogamy. He could bear this too, if only she would entertain her friends in private.

159 When Jiroong married again the Dorje-Lopön and his latest wife decided to set up house on their own. She died a few years later and he now lives alone with his only other child, a boy of eighteen, whose mother was the fourth wife. Although still titular head of the monastery the old man finds it hard to make ends meet. He was rich at one time, but his money, and that of his son, has mostly gone in smoothing out his matrimonial tangles. At eighty-two he is looking for a
[831] sixth wife; but the girls in Lingtem, like the widow who married Tristram Shandy's Uncle Toby, are somewhat doubtful of his ability to please them.

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[837] The second Dorje-Lopön is sixty-nine, and entered into matrimony for the first time only a year ago, when he married an elderly Mun, Pom-ri, on the death of her husband; but the pair had been lovers for forty years. The Dorje-Lopön always called himself a celibate; but this is what actually happened: While he was still a boy, his elder
159 brother was married, but shortly after left for Gangtok,
595 leaving his wife at home. The Dorje-Lopön would in any case have had the right to cohabit with her; but in this

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particular case his elder brother agreed to regard him in the light of a co-husband, which meant that the Dorje-Lopön and his elder brother's wife could live together quite openly. This state of affairs was almost exactly similar to the so-called Tibetan polyandry. It is not usual amongst Lepchas, and the Mandal told me that he had not heard of any other cases. After the return of the elder the two brothers lived with the one wife in perfect amity for years. The elder brother died some time ago, and it was only after his wife's death that the Dorje-Lopön actually married, since the original ceremony was performed only by his elder brother. There were no children by this marriage.

I often wondered why he decided to marry so late in life; but after we got to know him well he told us, with a twinkle in his eye, that for an old man marriage was preferable to promiscuity. Also, in his old age he liked to think that there was someone to care for him. He seemed to have a good knowledge of his books and generally officiated at the monastery services, since his senior does not nowadays often attend. He is the only man in Lingtem who has acquired the necessary knowledge to keep away hail, and for this reason his services are much in demand at certain times of the year. He has no property of his own, and lives in the house of Tafoor, the son of his younger brother.

* * * * *

Tafoor, whose rank is *Umzet*, is secretary and treasurer of Lingtem monastery. Inclined to be stout, he has few worldly cares and looks the typical jovial monk. His father, until the time of his death, was Mukhtiyar of the whole of Jongu district; as a result of which Tafoor and his brother have inherited not only a considerable number of fields, but also one of the best houses in the village, complete with its own private altar, images, and books. He is by far the best-educated man in Lingtem, and has a good knowledge of Tibetan sacred literature: also he speaks Nepali. Although a Lama he might have followed his father but for the fact,

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already noted, that he is the only man in the district who knows how to keep away rain. As it is, he is the mainspring of the local Church, and is destined one day to be its head. He is at present thirty-five, and was married at seventeen to a girl five years his junior. Before becoming a Lama he studied for five years. In those days there were six other boys all learning with the same teacher, and they used to compete amongst themselves, and so learnt rapidly. His father, too, was a Lama and in his younger days spent some years at a monastery in Gangtok in order to receive higher instruction. While he was there, though already married, he fell in love with a girl who eventually became his second wife. On his return to Lingtem he told his wife what had happened; but she argued that since she had borne him two children it was unnecessary to bring another woman to the house. Tafoor's father, however, said he would love them both equally; and his wife therefore agreed to the second marriage. Although Tafoor's mother did not know it, the second wife had already given birth to a daughter while the pair were living together in Gangtok, and this child was later married to the son of the local artist. After the second wife had established herself in Lingtem she refused to allow Tafoor's father to have any further connection with his first wife, whereupon Tafoor's mother married a man named Dunbyo, with whom she still lives, Dunbyo giving Tafoor's father a pig as compensation.

Tafoor has four children, the eldest of whom, Chimpet, a boy of fourteen, is learning to be a Lama. He is rather sullen in appearance and spends most of his time catapulting birds, in the imitation of which he displays quite remarkable skill. His head is badly scarred, due to the fact that his mother, a rather ill-tempered woman, hit him with a burning brand when he was small. His father says he is quite intelligent but will not apply himself to his studies, which he started some six months ago. The second Dorje-Lopön, his grandfather's brother, is teaching him, and so he lives at home. Chimpet says he wants to grow up quickly, so that he can enjoy himself properly. He appears to be unusually young for his age, and has not yet reached the age of puberty.

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the change has been effected nothing can be done to alter it back.

Chodu, more than any other Lepcha I have ever met, conformed in appearance with the popular conception of these people as "Elves of the forest"; but actually his gnome-like appearance was somewhat deceptive. He was so pre-occupied with sex, more even than the average Lepcha, that we had already christened him "the dirty Reverend" before we knew his proper name; and under this title he appears in all my notes. When he found that we were fond of flowers he used often to bring in great armfuls of purple *Dendrobium* orchids, flowers that in England would have cost at least a shilling for a single bloom; and on these occasions our otherwise severely simple living-room would assume the appearance of a popular actress's dressing-room. His duties as a Ka-Ne brought him almost daily to the monastery, when he would come tiptoeing into the bedroom to change the water on the altar. A very likeable person and full of fun.

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The *Chötembu*, who was otherwise known as Lumbar, was fifty-two. Grey-haired and jolly, his rather peculiar goitre gave the impression of a roll of fat all round his neck. His origin was somewhat obscure, for he appears to have been what our interpreter described as the "blasted son" of a Tibetan. He can neither read nor write, and says he has never exercised his prerogative to beat his fellows. His first wife, now forty-seven, is a daughter of Pom-Ri, now the wife of the second Dorje Lopön. After ten years of married life his wife, since she had borne him no child, urged him to marry again; this he did, and although his second wife has given him two children he still remains faithful to the first. The two women live in separate houses, but there is no question of their not getting on together. The first lives alone in a cattle-shed because she likes to get away by herself at times, and finds it irksome to be always in a house full of people and noise. Chötembu divides his time between the

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two, but, so his son says, spends most of his nights with the senior.

Mrs. Chötembu number one, like her mother, is a Mun, but is mainly in request as a singer of songs, of which she has an immense repertoire. I once came across the family working in the fields and asked her to give us a tune. I think she misunderstood my meaning; for it was only when I told her that I was really a *Ge-lug-pa*, or celibate monk, that she finally left me alone: but it took some months to convince her. I should add, however, that her advances were always made in public and caused much amusement to the rest of the family.

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Datoop is the elder son of the senior Dorje Lopön. Until relieved by Lumbar he acted as Chötembu for over three years, and is now awaiting advancement to the rank of Umzet. As a boy he spent some years in Gangtok, where he was trained as a carpenter, at which trade he is still employed. He superintends most local building, and with the assistance of the *Hlaribu*, or artist, made most of the woodwork in the Lingtem monastery. He was married at nineteen to a girl seven years his junior, but the pair did not live together until after his return from Gangtok, some five years later. He becomes almost heated when discussing his father's affairs, but thinks it unlikely that he will marry again, since "he is now too old for that sort of thing." He says he would rather live in some place like Gangtok, "where there are people to see and gossip to hear; bazaars to walk in and all sorts of things to buy; but what can one do? Town life is easy, since one does not work in the fields: but without work in the fields money is not forthcoming, so it is better to stay at home." Datoop thinks it good to die rich, since then one's children can do the death ceremony in a proper manner. It would be nice to live to eighty, as up to that age most men can still work in the fields: but to live on till a hundred is definitely staying too long. One does not want to be a burden to others.

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As a matter of fact, Datoop's wife has never exercised her 159
powers. Although she is such a commanding personality, everybody likes her; and we often heard of her going out of the way to lend a helping hand to others.

* * * * *

The Inebu Dorje Lopön is a widow of sixty-two and lives alone with her adopted son, having had no children of her own. Although the official leader of the women, she can [212
neither read nor write, and has turned up to-day, the 10th 597]
of April, in ignorance of the fact that no ceremony will take place for another two days. Her husband, who died many years ago, was a layman. After they had been married for 159
some years she persuaded him to take her niece as a second 595
wife. This he did; but she too was childless. The Dorje Lopön liked having a co-wife, because it made her housework very much lighter. The husband used to spend alternate nights with his two wives, but this was never a cause of quarrels. She thinks that for women the period immediately after marriage is the happiest time of life. Both men and women begin to get old at sixty; but even so, if she had a husband she would still enjoy sleeping with him. She did not actually remain faithful to her husband's memory; but has now ceased to be interested in the cares of the flesh. Her 159
adopted son is the child of her elder brother. This boy, who [684]
was betrothed a few months ago, and will be married next year, is at present living at the home of his future bride. The Mandal arranged the match, and since the Dorje Lopön has very little money of her own friends have subscribed towards the marriage expenses; but the boy's own father has paid a considerable part. Suspended from her necklace she always wore the broken head of a small china stag, of the type one can buy in the street for a penny. She [789]
had acquired this beast many years ago, and when it broke had kept its head, which she regarded as some sort of miraculous charm. We never saw her without it.

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If she refuses her consent he gives merely the *Soo* payment, and the matter is closed: but if she is willing, as seems to be commonly the case, he may take the girl into his home as an additional wife.

No stigma attaches to the mother of a bastard and she is able to contract a normal marriage in due course. In view of the fact that so many women in Jongu are sterile, she may even be sought after and may get a richer husband than would otherwise have been the case; but the child will generally be left with its mother's parents.

When an illegitimate child is born its father will go secretly to a Lama to find out what its name is to be; but if the father refuses to acknowledge it, then the mother's father will make the necessary visit, since a Lama will not himself go to a house for the purpose of naming an illegitimate child. Apart from this minor matter, the usual third-day festivities will be carried out exactly as for a child born in wedlock.

When a father refuses to acknowledge paternity a small ceremony is carried out before the child is born. A tree is pointed out as representing the child's father, and a small bamboo sliver, meant to represent his penis, is stuck into the base of it. This is then spat upon in a contemptuous fashion, after which the tree is addressed in an insulting voice and told that it is the father of the child. It is thought that when the child is born the tree will wither.

One curious case in connection with illegitimacy may be mentioned in passing. There is in Lingtem a certain family of which several members have died of leprosy. The nephew of the present head of the family, whose father died of this disease, is said by his uncle to be a bastard. This, however, is thought by the rest of the village to be a pure fiction, and it is said that he has made the boy an "honorary" bastard, so to speak, to clear him from the herditary taint of leprosy. This will do away with the difficulty, which might otherwise ensue, of finding him a wife, when the time comes for him to marry.

Most people seem to think that it is desirable for the first-

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

CHAPTER 11

Marriage and General Relations between the Sexes

595 CONTRARY to the reports of earlier travellers, the Lepchas (at least in Jongu) do not practise polyandry, except in very rare circumstances. It is true that their customs permit it; but in actual practice two brothers only share a wife when one is continuously away from home. The only known cases have already been noted in the chapter of personal histories. When polyandry does occur it is always, as in Tibet, what is technically known as adelphic polyandry, that is to say the co-husbands are always brothers; and in discussing the subject the idea that a woman could be married to two men who were not themselves brothers (in the full biological sense) appeared never to have entered the people's heads. Whether it would be possible for a woman to marry more than two brothers at a time I do not know, since a case of this sort has not occurred in Jongu. I imagine that
[177] polyandry, such as it is in Jongu, has arisen entirely as a result of contact with Tibetans. It appears to be unknown among Lepchas of other districts, and in discussing the subject the Mandal was definitely ashamed to own that it sometimes occurred. "It is not a good thing," he said; "but it is common among Tibetans, and is sometimes a convenience when one brother is more or less permanently away from home. For this reason I have occasionally recommended, as in the case of Pichi and his brother, that a girl should be married to two brothers."

595 837 A distinction must, however, be drawn between marriage and sexual relations: for while it is unusual for a Lepcha girl to be actually married to more than one man, it is common for her occasionally to sleep with all his younger brothers. The important point to note, however, is that she is not married

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

595 837 to them, whereas in a true polyandrous society each of the men concerned is a legal husband, and takes his place as such at the wedding ceremonies.

835 It will perhaps make the situation clearer if I explain the sexual rights of a Lepcha in tabular form.

A man may sleep with:

1. The wives of all his elder brothers, and their younger sisters, whether married or not.

2. The wives of his father's younger brothers, and their younger sisters.

Bearing this in mind it can be seen that the youngest of seven brothers, for instance, whose father was himself the eldest of seven more brothers would have the legal right to sleep with no less than twelve women; but this is assuming that none of the women concerned had any younger sisters. This is, of course, a purely theoretical example and in actual practice many of the women would not normally be available since their husbands would probably be living in different villages: but even so, it means that many a man has "a home from home," so to speak, in several of the surrounding villages. In the two categories mentioned above the woman concerned cannot refuse the man's advances. He has a legal right to copulate with her, and may, if necessary, force her to submit against her will. But in addition to all these women 837 with whom a man may legally sleep, there is no moral 835 objection to his doing so with any women with whom he can trace a like classificatory relationship. But in this case the matter is entirely dependent upon the woman's willingness to co-operate: she cannot be forced to submit. In actual practice the result of all this is that in a small village there are very few women with whom a man may not amuse himself. This was certainly the case in Lingtem; but there were one or two unfortunate only sons who had, legally at all events, to confine themselves to their own wives. A great many men, however, do also have affairs with other women, of which little notice is taken, even by the husbands concerned: but

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

of course, in addition to the actual cash contributed by the guests at the *Ong kay* already described.

There is a modified form of betrothal ceremony known as *Ah-kut*, which is done by people who cannot afford the full *Ashyek* payments. It consists in the presentation of one pig's carcass to the bride's parents. No one would willingly be married by means of *Ah-kut*, which may be compared with our marriage by Registrar, if he could possibly afford to carry out the full ceremony, for it is a point of honour with Lepchas to entertain one's friends to the full limit of one's purse; and a failure to do so, should funds be available, would be to stamp oneself as a mean fellow and a bad co-operator. *Ah-kut*, however, constitutes full legal marriage, and no further ceremony is necessary.

Except for the additional wives a man may acquire by inheritance Lepchas do not normally marry a second wife unless the first proves to be childless. The custom of marrying additional wives would appear to be an importation, probably through contact with Nepalis, for the language does not contain any specific word to denote a second wife, the Nepali word *Kanchi* being commonly used for this purpose. I am, of course, aware that it is dangerous to base an hypothesis of this sort on linguistic evidence alone; but it is significant that in other parts of Sikkim and adjacent British India Lepchas are monogamous except for the additional wives some acquire by inheritance.

In Jongu it appears that a childless woman nearly always induces her husband to marry again. If possible he will take one of his first wife's sisters, or possibly a niece; but in any case he should try and obtain some sort of relative of his wife, since this arrangement is thought to cause less domestic friction than might otherwise be the case. It sometimes happens, however, that a man decides to remarry without reference to his first wife (as in the case of Aga, for instance), in which case the new wife must give a present, known as *Thim seut*. It does not take any special form. The new wife should also give something to the eldest child of the first wife.

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

wife. It appears that in such cases the first wife's feelings are not in any way considered, and the *Thim seut* is given, not to appease her but to prevent her becoming ill, which might otherwise be the case.

If a man wishes to divorce his wife he must pay eight-eighty rupees in cash to her father and give her one-half of all his movable property. This is known as *Gay-top*. Children also are divided between the two parents by mutual arrangement. Should there be an only daughter her eventual marriage price will be divided between the parents; and in the case of an only son it is usual for him to remain with his father, who pays the mother an additional forty rupees, one cow, one pig and a length of cloth for this privilege. A daughter may live with either parent; but whatever the decision, the question of payment does not in her case arise. In exceptional circumstances it may be arranged that a son shall remain with his mother, and in this case she gives the above presents to her husband, substituting an ox for the cow and a copper pot for the length of cloth.

There are no cases of divorce in Lingtem within living memory, nor does it often happen elsewhere; but in view of the constitution of Lepcha society there would appear to be little need of divorce, since it fulfils no useful function.

7: Hooker D-5 (1849-1851) 1854
AK5 Lepcha AK5

181 his share, coming up and giving the donor a brusque bow and thanks. They have learnt to overcharge already, and
439 use extortion in dealing, as is the custom with the people of the plains; but it is clumsily done, and never accompanied with the grasping air and insufferable whine of the
411 latter. They are constantly armed with a long, heavy,
578 straight knife,* but never draw it on one another: family and political feuds are alike unheard of amongst them.

181 The Lepcha is in morals far superior to his Tibet and
595 Bhotan neighbours, polyandry being unknown, and polygamy rare. This is no doubt greatly due to the conventual system not being carried to such an excess as in Bhotan, where the ties of relationship even are disregarded.

291 Like the New Zealander, Tasmanian, Fuegian, and natives of other climates, which, though cold, are moist and equable, the Lepcha's dress is very scanty, and when we are wearing woollen under-garments and hose, he is content with one cotton vesture, which is loosely thrown round the body, leaving one or both arms free; it reaches to the knee, and is gathered round the waist: its fabric is close, the ground colour white, ornamented with longitudinal blue stripes, two or three fingers broad, prettily worked with red and white. When new and clean, this garb is remarkably handsome and gay, but not showy. In cold weather an upper garment with loose sleeves is added.

411 A long knife, with a common wooden handle, hangs by
291 the side, stuck in a sheath; he has often also a quiver of poisoned arrows and a bamboo† bow across his back. On his right wrist is a curious wooden guard for the

* It is called "Ban," and serves equally for plough, toothpick, table-knife, hatchet, hammer, and sword.

[439] † The bamboo, of which the quiver is made, is thin and light: it is brought from Assam, and called Tulda, or Dulwa, by the Bengalees.